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AUTHOR Kline, William A.
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ABSTRACT

This paper describes an experimental teacher education program organized in terms of the "social process model," a theory of educational interaction that stresses: 1) the ecology of social environments; 2) the rules and roles involved in given social episodes; and 3) the status of social episodes as interpersonal games. Classrooms are defined as culturally-based social ecologies, with standardized rules and norms necessary for interaction. A game model is used to analyze behavior in terms of participants' attempts to maximize chances of winning and avoiding losing within the social context of the classroom. The model suggests that the exploration of social structures in schools and classrooms is an essential component of preservice as well as inservice teacher education. (LH)

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William A. Kline

SOCIAL PROCESS MODEL FOR TEACHER PREPARATION

ABSTRACT

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Teacher preparation and educational research are strongly delimited by a behavioristic/mechanistic orientation which focuses on behavior independently of social ecologies. In teacher education, technical skills or competencies are often emphasized without consideration of total social milieu in which these behaviors are practiced; in research, behavior is often analyzed without analysis of the social ecology of the experiment itself. The social process model proposes the analysis of social structures and processes as important elements of teacher preparation and educational research.

The Social Process Model contains three basic components: the ecology of social environments, rules and roles of social episodes, and social episodes as games. Classrooms can be investigated as unique, culturally based social ecologies, complete with rules or norms based on expectations all participants have for behavior. The metaphor of the game can be used to analyze behavior in terms of participants' attempts to maximize chances of winning and avoiding losing.

This paper summarizes an experimental teacher education program organized in terms of the Social Process Model. The program was based on the assumption that social processes of classrooms can be understood as consequences of the systematic violation of selected student expectations for classroom behavior. In this instance, students attended a mandatory class in which they were given the total responsibility to develop content. The effect was to create a hiatus in the social structure leading to opportunities for students to discover and understand the normal structures and processes of classrooms. In addition, students were able to experiment with their own behavior in moderately stressful environments, leading to insights regarding self and others. The model, deemed successful, suggests that the exploration of social structures in schooling may serve to enhance teachers' feelings of efficacy in complex school environments. Hopefully, such changes in teacher feeling and perception lead to increased experimentation and innovation in classroom structures and processes, allowing for increased student autonomy, greater inclusion of diversity in classrooms, enhanced humaneness and justice, and more satisfying human relationships generally.

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SOCIAL PROCESS MODEL FOR TEACHER PREPARATION

William A. Kline*
Whitworth College

Statement of the Problem

A fundamental problem in both educational research and teacher education is the tendency to focus on behavior independently of the environments in which it occurs. Countless studies of "learning" proceed as if the classroom environment is not an important variable or at least as if the "classroom," as a social entity, is known and understood by all. Likewise, teacher training often emphasizes technical skills independently of the environments in which these skills are used. This mechanistic or behavioristic thrust pervades much of our professional endeavor and, although important, may be delimiting in its effects.

Both educational research and teacher preparation are shaped by professional milieus which both enhance and inhibit investigation. Methodological rules provide ways for us to discover knowledge but at the same time impose technical constraints. The current professional milieu tends to place emphasis on experimental method, quantitative analysis, and computers and is strongly influenced by the availability of research contracts combined with the institutional politics of higher education. In professional preparation, the milieu is affected by

*I wish to acknowledge the collaboration with Dr. Larry Dale, Kent, Washington, Public Schools (formerly associate professor of education, Oregon State University), without whom this project would be undone.

similar concerns. Teacher training is frequently conceived as a problem in "how to do it" and focuses on a myriad of "competencies" or technical skills. There exists an assumption that the mastery of techniques constitutes the "basics" of professional preparation. Although research and teacher education have developed impressively sophisticated processes and content in the last two decades, technology has tended to become an orthodoxy which discounts efforts not amenable to experimental verification and precise operationism.

The problems for research and teacher education are identical. In research the need is to strongly note that the social ecology is an independent and moderating variable, that classroom achievement, for example, is affected by and is often a product of prevailing social norms and processes. Research might profitably give consideration to the individual as an active agent in the experimental process in which s/he perceives norms, makes plans, and behaves in certain ways. Behavior is not simply a reaction to something, but an interaction with the multiplicity of rules and events, including distal ecologies such as home and community.

Similarly, teacher education, by discounting the environment, ignores fundamental interactive effects of teaching. Technical skills often seem to be skills without context. By focusing only on skills, the notion of social role is often ignored, and the discontinuity of moving from college student to teacher is treated incompletely, if at all. Learning to become a teacher involves a process in which the sum total is much greater than the parts. Such learning is difficult to

approach fragmentally and sequentially as implied by conventional technological processes. To use the metaphor of a baseball game: We can teach a foreigner much about the game by describing each of the positions and what each person does within these positions. Yet the sum of each of the positions played does not add up to a complete game. To talk only about the parts of the game without discussing the whole, the listener is quite likely to see baseball as consisting of strange behavior(s) in a strange situation (It may be so anyway!).

Human action has meaning insofar as it occurs in a social context and is bound up in language, culture, and social structure. The analysis of behavior cannot be divorced from the social context in which behavior occurs. Yet conventional wisdom does seem to suggest this by removing behavior from context and subjecting it to fragmentary and microscopic treatment.

Although education as a profession is very much influenced by and committed to technological models and practices, there exists a substantial number of academics who eschew conventional wisdom. For example, we have the "humanists" who make the claim that the "hard" sciences offer but a limited view of the field.¹ Social scientists themselves have raised important questions about the strong adherence to conventional "scientific" models.² Nonexperimental modes of social inquiry, such

¹Elliot Eisner, "Educational Connoisseurship and Criticism: Their Form and Functions in Educational Evaluation," Journal of Aesthetic Education 10 (1976), 135-5.

²C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination (New York; Oxford University Press, 1959). Urie Bronfenbrenner, "The Experimental Ecology of Education," Teachers College Record 78 (1976), 157-204.

as ethnography and history often obtain considerable support with powerful insights not achieved by experimental research³

A basic problem in ecological studies lies in our inability to develop constructs amenable to operationism. That is, it is possible to observe a wide array of data, but quite another thing to conceptualize matters in such a way as to make sense out of what we see. Frequently we tie our observations to very concrete theory, and we settle for practical things as how to arrange classroom desks as opposed to over-arching structural analyses. A variation of this theme is to opt for a language consisting of gross distinctions, such as "structured" and "unstructured" or "open" and "closed" to describe different classes. In addition to the problem of precision in language, we have difficulty in determining the relative importance of particular data as causal factors. We really do not know whether observed behavior is due to the treatments we have given, the physical structure of the classroom, peer interactions, home influences, playground events, all of the above, or none of the above. The multidimensionality of social phenomena is not easily approached insofar as we hardly know where to look and how to begin. The social process model presented herein is an attempt to develop theory amenable to inclusion and classification of diverse and enigmatic social data and is presented as an important theoretical adjunct to educational inquiry and professional preparation.

³Raymond Callahan, Education and the Cult of Efficiency (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962). David Tyack, The One Best System (Cambridge, Mass.; Harvard University Press, 1974).

In order to cope with the task of understanding classroom norms and behavior, I have chosen to draw heavily from the disciplines of anthropology and social psychology. In addition, I have drawn from humanistic studies in education for further insight and conceptual richness.⁴

The Social Process Model

The Social Process Model (SPM) is based on the idea that all social episodes, including classrooms, can be analyzed in terms of the ecological setting in which behavior occurs.⁵ The ecological setting is linked to the expectations participants have for behavior in these settings, and these expectations constitute rules or norms. The behavior that occurs is planned for by the participants, and they can testify to both their planning and their ultimate behavior. Planning is directed toward strategies for success in a given setting. The SPM contains three basic components:

1. The ecology of social environments
2. Rules and roles of social episodes
3. Social episodes as games

1. Ecology of social environments. Social episodes are cultural phenomena, insofar as they are peculiar to each culture and the participants in the episodes know the culturally prescribed "rules" or norms.

⁴Eisner, "Connoisseur and Criticism . . ."

⁵Roger Barker, Ecological Psychology (Stanford, Ca.; Stanford University Press, 1968).

Proper behavior occurs as a consequence of immersion in a particular environment. Thus, we know how to behave in such diverse places as college classrooms, cocktail parties, churches, theaters, and rooting sections. Behavior is signified by physical environments and this fact alone leads to expectations for one's own and others' behavior. Behavior on the very first day of school, for example, is indicative of the power of environments as social cues. How have college students come to know they should sit in rows with notebooks open, pencils poised, and "attentive" looks on their faces? Why don't they rearrange the chairs, initiate their own content, decide what they will study rather than what the professor tells them? Likewise, teachers come to these ecologies with expectations having to do with such things as the curriculum, methods of instruction, testing, evaluation, discipline, and control. As classes proceed, the rules become modified by the participants' expectations, particularly those set by the teacher. Nonetheless, all participants, unless there has been a breakdown in the teacher's conduct of his/her role, behave essentially as would be expected in a classroom setting.

2. Roles and rules of social episodes. A link between the social ecology and behavior is the concept of role expectation. The expectations for behavior held by all of the participants in an episode constitute the rules or norms for that episode. These rules consist of rights, privileges, duties, and obligations of the participants, consistent with their positions in the social structure. Roles are interbehavioral in the sense that they take into account the occupants

of other social positions. Each person is expected to perform in certain ways. These role expectations are imperatives specifying "how" and "should."⁶

The corresponding rules in social episodes provide meaning whereby individuals plan and carry out behavior. Plans focus on chances for success or failure. In classrooms, this planning may have to do with figuring out how to please the teacher, how to please peers, or how to be very unobtrusive. In any case, for both students and teacher, behavior is a response to each person's perceptions of his or her ability to perform in the social situation at hand. Eventually the actors come to select or deselect classroom situations largely on the basis of their own expectations for success or failure.

Classroom rules consist of far more than teacher regulations written on a syllabus or announced in class. Classroom rules have to do with the expectations for behavior held by all of the participants. Typically, students expect teacher behavior to consist of rule setting, assignment giving, information giving, etc. Teacher expectations for students usually focus on the accomplishment of units of work. Students' expectations for each other vary on the basis of shared experiences in which there come to exist patterns of leadership, task orientation, group orientation, and/or a variety of self-oriented roles.⁷ None of these expectations need be congruent with the teacher's

⁶Theodore Sarbin and Vernon Allen, "Role Theory," Handbook of Social Psychology, Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson, eds. (Reading, Mass.; Addison-Wesley, Inc., 1968) Vol. I, 498.

⁷Kenneth Benne and Paul Sheats, "Functional Roles of Group Members," Journal of Social Issues, 1948, 4, 41-49.

expectations, and many classroom processes seem to be in opposition to the teacher's stated purposes. As classes mature, a variety of ideographic expectations come into play, and each classroom emerges as a blend of nomothetic and ideographic expectations. Assuming the teacher's behavior does not sharply violate the expectations of the students, anxiety is held to fairly low levels and everyone generally behaves in a congruent fashion.

One way to approach the concept of rule/role is to use the metaphor of the theater as a psychological theory about people enacting real life dramas, in this case, dramas consistent with classroom ecologies. The theatrical metaphor involves skills, audience, complementarity of conduct, congruence of self and role, and convincingness of enactment.⁸ The processes of playing parts in real life dramas lead to normative considerations, insofar as holders of positions "ought" to do certain things. The "oughts" are influenced by ecological considerations and the quality of participants' role enactments. Within this framework, people are conscious social actors, controlling their performances and capable of commenting on them. Thus, a person is both an active agent directing his own behavior and an object responding to forces in the environment.⁹

⁸ Sarbin, "Role Theory," 488-9.

⁹ Romano Harre and Paul Secord, The Explanation of Social Behaviour (Totowa, N.J.; Rourman and Littlefield, 1972), 8.

In all social situations, individuals are more or less efficacious in the way in which they carry out their chosen roles, often depending on the degree to which the situation has clear-cut and congruent rules and the degree to which the individual feels free from stress and can respond spontaneously. Some episodes require little in the way of spontaneous behavior to the degree that roles are highly rehearsed. Other episodes may be problematic to the degree that the rules are not clearly known by the participants or that particular performers do not have accurate estimates of the way in which others with whom they interact define the episode. In these settings, behavior will be less readily predictable, resulting in dissatisfying social interaction. Under such circumstances, the individual cannot forecast the complementary conduct of others, and the resulting lack of clarity in role expectations lends to decreased effectiveness and productivity as evidenced by personal frustration and strain.

3. Social episodes as games. Harre and Secord describe a mid-range social episode in which the rules are well known to all of the actors, and behavior occurs spontaneously within these norms. Such episodes can be called "games."¹⁰ In "games" the actors know the social rules sufficiently well so as to plan for success and avoid failure.

¹⁰ Harre and Secord, The Explanation of Social Behaviour.

As in play, social games contain provisions for individual skill performances, are often competitive, have rules regarding right and wrong ways to win, usually include referees, and often contain games within games.¹¹ Winners keep playing games in which they win, and losers leave games in which they lose.¹² The metaphor of the game is appropriate for classrooms insofar as winning and losing are closely linked to the sorting function of schools.

The processes by which classrooms differentiate participants into winners and losers include rules, referees, and even "cheaters." Winning may include such things as attending to assigned tasks, feeling satisfied with one's performance, avoiding social responsibility, manipulating the teacher, and knowing when to "eyeball" a classmate's test. It may include games within games such as "Now I've Got You, You Son-of-a-Bitch Kid" (NIGYYSOBK), or "District Attorney."¹³

The behavior students and teachers enact in classrooms is partly a consequence of planning. That is, participants plan their behavior in terms of winning/losing in the context of specific rules for each classroom. Using the theatrical metaphor once again, planning has to

¹¹Eric Berne, Games People Play; The Psychology of Human Relationships (New York; Grove Press, 1964).

¹²Losing is very much a subjective notion. Following the theories of transactional analysis, people often persist in playing games in which they seemingly lose. Losing may be winning to some, and the etiology of various psychological investments in losing must be given consideration.

¹³Bernard Nisinkel, Games Played in the Classroom (unpublished manuscript based on Eric Berne, Games People Play).

do with performance. Teachers perform as they engage in the act of teaching. Students perform in terms of the rewards and punishments available in the situation. These rewards and punishments emanate from many sources, including peers and parents. Performances are planned somewhat in the fashion of improvisational theater in which performances are rehearsed but enactment is spontaneous. Moves which threaten the individual's perceived requirements for good performance are avoided--a possible key to the difficulty had in persuading teachers to attempt new modes of instruction. To change performance is to take substantial risks regarding winning; and winning, for teachers, often centers on the problem of social control in the classroom.

Although instruction has long been referred to as "performance," it is something far more subtle and complex than simply entertaining. Performance is planned for in the act of lesson planning. Lesson plans are "scripts" for teachers and vary in terms of how much allowance is made for spontaneity and improvisation. Many school administrators and professors of teacher education prefer detailed "scripts" allowing for little improvisation; others feel that improvisation is the essence of good teaching.¹⁴ Teachers, like students, often fail in regard to their performance demands, regardless of the quality of their lesson plans.

¹⁴ Arthur Combs, Donald Avila, and William Purkey, Helping Relationships; Basic Concepts for the Helping Professions (Boston; Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1974).

In this regard, teachers attempt to develop performances which they believe enable them to control the social dynamics in the classroom. Winning, for some teachers, involves the avoidance of spontaneity; for others the curriculum is perceived as overly confining and they engage in "flight" from the official purposes of the class. Some teachers blend the stated curriculum with the social dynamics in unique and unusual ways; other teachers resort to stultifying authoritarianism or dependency.

A major problem for teachers as they learn skills is that they are often unaware of the rules for classroom environments. Teacher language belies limited sophistication as classes are described as "structured" or "unstructured." The Social Process Model assumes that all social situations, including classrooms, have structures. It is impossible to have an unstructured classroom. The fact that a classroom may seem chaotic to the observer does not negate the existence of social structure, however enigmatic that structure might be. In this case, the task is to develop conceptualizations which illuminate the structure at hand. The limited awareness of social structures in classes may contribute to teachers' reluctance to experiment or to simply improve basic performance vis-a-vis class management and discipline.

The question here is: Can the rules be learned in such a way as to enable the teacher to consciously restructure situations consistent with his/her beliefs about good learning and good social processes? Can the knowledge of social structures enable the teacher to more

effectively cope with stress induced by violations of the norms or by stresses induced by problematic norms?

The Social Process Experiment

In order to answer the above questions, Professor Larry Dale, Oregon State University, and I developed an experimental process-oriented teacher education course in which we focused on behavior as it occurred in the unique social setting of the classroom. Initially, we asked the question: What would happen if students' expectations for teacher behavior were systematically violated on a daily basis? What would they do? What would they learn? Would they learn more/better than in a lecture class? Would they learn anything about classroom dynamics? To what extent would they learn to demonstrate experimental, risk-taking behavior of their own, preparatory to becoming teachers? To what extent might they obtain significant insights regarding their own ability to function in somewhat demanding interpersonal situations--situations characterizing teaching as a profession?

The classes, taught initially at Oregon State University and later by this author at Whitworth College, were beginning-level social foundations classes and either followed or were concurrent with a field assignment in a nearby school. Students represented a cross section of major fields of study.

In the series of classes in which we applied the model, we allotted substantial class time to "laboratories" in which students were required to cope with systematic violations of their expectations

for teacher behavior. It was hypothesized that by providing a deliberate hiatus in the social structure, students would discover norms by virtue of their absence. To do so, we eliminated all teacher-initiated content while retaining rules for required daily attendance, tests, papers, deadlines, and class participation. The task requirements were consistent with the usual requirements of compulsory schooling, whereas content, the "stuff" of classrooms, was placed squarely and emphatically in students' hands. Laboratory sessions were begun and ended precisely on time with nothing more from the teachers than "We can begin now." and "Time is up."

Each group of students was assigned to a "laboratory" for approximately twenty-four hours of meeting time per term. Laboratories were undirected by the professor, yet confined to the classroom, thus simulating compulsory school classrooms in which everyone must attend, regardless of the nature of what goes on there. No teacher-made task was assigned to the group as a whole, although learning teams within the group had major tasks to perform. The development of large group tasks was the responsibility of the group itself. Classroom social systems were intertwined by requiring each class member to participate in a learning team which was responsible for analyzing selected aspects of the class.¹⁵ Teams were required to analyze selected behavior as it occurred in a nontask compulsory situation. Learning teams were

¹⁵For this process, I wish to give credit to Professor Frank B. F. Hawkinshire.

required to accomplish assigned tasks as groups and, for the most part, had to arrange their work outside the scheduled class time. Assignments, given arbitrarily, included the investigation of roles, norms, processes, content, sociometry, values, interpersonal relations, leadership, and intrapersonal effects. (Team reports were also used as data for purposes of determining learning outcomes.) Learning teams were given additional assignments, such as book reviews or community studies to become "energized" early in the quarter and also to introduce further dissonance regarding teacher role and educational processes. Often class agendas focused on problems in making learning teams work and team projects became the basis for learning experiences in group process. Furthermore, the learning team assignments forced an additional violation of norms by disallowing individualized competition as the classroom "game." Students who complained that they worked best by themselves were firmly reminded that learning team tasks were group assignments.

Initially, classes consisted of approximately fifteen students per lab. Later, classes were increased in size with 38 the largest group treated to date. The increased class size was illuminative insofar as it simulated public school classroom size and also demonstrated the viability of process models for any "reasonably sized" group.¹⁶ Time allotments varied from one hour and fifteen minutes to

¹⁶ Although we approached the first large group with some trepidation, we soon advocated such groups. In addition to the simulative character of large groups, we came to conclude that far more could be learned due to diversity and increased complexity of interactions.

two hours per session, depending on university scheduling. Students received five- or six-quarter hours of university credit for the class, depending on the overall program structure. Laboratories were "punctuated" with occasional lectures, sometimes "exposing" the real purposes of the lab. Eventually we came to discard these explanations because of repeated instances in which we felt students' emotionality associated with the labs overwhelmed intellect and made such lectures moot.

In order to assess, both formatively and summatively, the effects of such a unique teacher education course, we utilized six pieces of data. At the conclusion of each session, students were required to fill out postmeeting questionnaires. The questionnaire asked four questions: "List the three most important things you learned." "List the three least important things you learned." "Rate the quality of the meeting on a scale of one to five." "Rate your own participation on a scale of one to five." PMR's were designed to provide instant, proximal feedback regarding events just concluded. PMR's were "public" and available to students, and this data was often the basis for future class content as well as learning team research projects.

We required journals with entries based on each class session. In these journals, students were encouraged to be reflective, analytical, speculative. We collected journals intermittently and responded to many student comments with questions urging further inquiry. Journals constituted private discourse between the staff and students, and the content was not shared with other students.

Additional data was obtained from class discussions and activities. Since the instructors were unusually indirect, there was ample opportunity to observe and analyze groups as they progressed. Considerable staff time was given to debriefing, often including graduate and advanced undergraduates affiliated with the project as staff associates.

Frequently students would seek out staff for purposes of resolving personal or team concerns emanating from the course. Conferences, ranging from academic "how-to" sessions to intensive personal counseling, were instrumental in providing additional information. Such sessions also provided real service to the students involved.

Examinations also provided data. Exams focused on class processes and tended to be evaluative in nature. Thus, rather than ask specific questions about the processes experienced, we asked them to tell us what they learned, what they liked, what they disliked, how much they talked with others, how much they thought about themselves in the group, and so forth. We also asked them to rate whether or not this class caused them to think more or less than other classes, to read more, to talk to others more. The open-endedness of such "exams" allowed for further analysis and also served to validate the process.

Eventually we came to hold an almost compulsive commitment to asking students what they learned. Answers to this question may be more important than the usual achievement tests which put a premium on cramming, forgetting, and, most importantly, teacher-transmitted knowledge as opposed to student developed knowledge.

Finally, team projects provided additional data.

In structuring the course, we theorized that anxiety would characterize a major portion of the students' experiences in the laboratories. Students, indeed, expressed anxiety and effort was expended in the groups to overcome feelings brought about by the professors' unique approach. Reactions to anxiety and subsequent analyses led students to draw many analogues with public school classrooms in which the "game" centers on teacher expectations.

Responses to anxiety fit the classic distinctions of fight, flight, pairing, and dependency. Such events provided students with opportunities to investigate such things as student challenges to teacher authority, truancy, peer pressure, and teacher pleasing. Discussions enabled students to identify and probe such important school concerns as socialization, teacher-student responsibility, the nature of learning, interpersonal relations, conflict resolution, schools as social systems, and values.

As the experience progressed, the classes tended to conform to classic patterns of group development. Beginning as aggregates of individuals, classes gradually developed a sense of "communities" in which members enjoyed commitment to the group while obtaining support for individual achievement, competence, and creativity. The last stages of group activity were characterized by increased intimacy, sharing, interpersonal confrontation as part of the problem-solving process, and support for individuality. Although the final sessions were not always harmonious, there was evidence of advanced group maturity. In these late sessions, conflict did not seem to induce great personal anxiety.

In the final evaluations there were no significant differences in personal reactions to classes which ended with conflict as compared to those experiences ending on a note of consensus and agreement.

The results of the experiment were intriguing and overwhelmingly positive. Student writings and discussions focused on learning about themselves and others in the context of schooling. Some students found the experience to be therapeutically challenging and were stimulated to inquire into issues of a highly personal nature. Other students used the class as an opportunity to make career decisions about teaching. Still other students found the class to be an opportunity to experiment with their behavior in a setting of limited risk. A few students found the anxiety to be sufficiently overpowering so as to rate the class a failure. In the latter case, we can only take umbrage in the thought that it is a rare teacher, indeed, who will obtain total agreement from students about the value of his or her class.

The social process model experiments, although lacking "scientific rigor," were very successful. Yet there are clear limitations, the most important having to do with the fact that despite all claims and beliefs, it cannot be said that this approach is more effective in preparing teachers than any other.

Although the project lays claim to the value of understanding classroom social dynamics as prerequisite to effective teaching, it is impossible to say whether this particular project did so. Although students may long remember the course, it cannot be said that they are more effective teachers, or even more effective human beings because of it. Furthermore, it cannot be said that they possess any special

knowledge not possessed by teachers in general. At best, results can only focus on short-term outcomes of the specific courses in which the model is used. Long-term follow-up is necessary and such follow-up will not be forthcoming.

In its own terms, the model seems to be effective. Students demonstrate insights into classroom processes, using the laboratory experience as an analogue. Yet there are few generalizations which repeatedly emerge, raising questions of program accountability. If anything, the model underlines the notion that regardless of teaching technique, learning is an individual enterprise.

On the affective level, students are given sustained opportunity to cope with interpersonal conflict and the resulting emotionality. Over time students learn to confront difficult issues rather than engage in various forms of flight. The conventional notion of "feeling good" tends to give way to a willingness to risk one's feelings in order to solve problems. As labs progress, students tend to become more "I" centered in their discussions, and intellectualizing diminishes.* Many students utilize the laboratory experience to obtain feedback from others regarding personal idiosyncracies, particularly characteristics which might be problematic in teaching. In addition, students tend to investigate their own characteristic ways of coping with stress and, for some students, the program has therapeutic implications. Even

* In later labs, the textbook, TET; Teacher Effectiveness Training, was required. Students frequently attempted to practice some of the communications principles contained therein.

those individuals who choose consistent patterns of flight through silence provide occasional testimony, either orally or in journals, regarding personal motives, insights, questions, and problems. Indeed, an important outcome, in addition to the general inquiry into social processes, is the feeling that participants have an opportunity to experiment with themselves in a moderately ambiguous environment, an environment that is ultimately supportive of individuals attempting to cope with new forms of social interaction. This test is highly appropriate for those preparing for the helping professions.

It may be argued that the SPM simply substitutes a new game for an old game. Indeed, this is exactly the case. However, it is the "foil" presented by the new game in an "old-game" context in which insights are possible. The systematic rendering of the social fabric establishes conditions in which new rule making is imperative. The collective need to cope with new and difficult rules exposes the old rules for all to see. As an example, the model consistently exposes the individuality and exceptionality of all members of the group. Class members give frequent testimony to the acceptance of others, particularly students who present the most challenge in classrooms. The "silent people," the "talkers," and other stereotypes are typically dissected as an outcome of the experience. The model holds some promise as a vehicle for multicultural education in a typically homogeneous community--the university.

Conclusions

Teacher education is a problem in discontinuity. Little in teacher education seems to prepare students cognitively or affectively for the new role s/he may ultimately assume. The individual's transitions across nonrepetitive roles are aided somewhat by society's use of formalized techniques which facilitate change. Such techniques become ceremonials or rites of passage which provide sharp distinctions between the abandoned role of student/child in favor of the new role of teacher/adult. The new role, once learned, is not particularly ambiguous. The problem resides in the degree to which we choose to maintain former rites of passage in favor of new ones which might promise some additional degrees of personal efficacy. If teacher understanding of social processes contributes to role efficacy, then processes whereby we can illuminate social dynamics seem to have merit.

Role efficacy in teaching could well include the development and acceptance of complexity as a prerequisite to professional status. Common teacher language which includes words rooted in simplistic social perceptions may be overly imprecise and dysfunctional. Such language tends to gloss over important social distinctions and may contribute to teachers' firm conservatism and reluctance to function in other than highly didactic modes. The blinders of common language may be especially powerful in regard to action in environments of culture conflict such as are found in urban schools. The imprecision of language and thought regarding schooling may serve to perpetuate the more invidious forms of discrimination extant in schools.

The problem of focusing on behavior independently of environments is, in some fashion, ironic to the degree that some recent innovations in education have been based on a belief that changes in physical environments actually lead to changes in social behavior. Architects and school planners have suggested that environments are stable and possess rules which determine behavior. Certainly many "open schools" are based on this notion. Yet it remains that two important professional subdivisions, research and teacher education, proceed as if social ecologies and processes are relatively unimportant.

A basic need in both educational research and teacher preparation is to discover rules determined by environments and to link these rules to personal and social outcomes. For researchers, ecologically oriented investigations have implications for the generalizability of research; for the teacher, such inquiries might assist in developing personal power.

Of course, it may be said that all of this is academic. Researchers know and accept the environmental norms; successful teachers learn the norms quickly and incompetents are sorted out. Yet it is reasonable to suggest that both fields have had but limited success in dealing with some very perplexing and significant problems. Perhaps new foci are necessary. I suggest the following list of questions for starters:

1. How can classroom rules be modified so that students learn autonomously as opposed to excessive dependence on the teacher, however convivial that dependence might be?

2. How can the rules be changed so as to create more alternatives for students?

3. How can rules be changed so as to include all students, especially the handicapped, minorities, and those we don't much like personally?

4. How can the rules be changed so that teachers and students feel better about themselves in the contexts of schooling?

5. How can the rules be changed so that schools and classrooms become more consistently humane and just?

6. How can rules be understood so that the participants can learn ways to interact without using destructive forms of manipulation and power?

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